
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District: **Cleveland Park Historic District** (x) Agenda
Address: **3522 Connecticut Avenue, NW** () Consent

Meeting Date: **February 23, 2012** (x) New construction
Case Number: **12-211**

Staff Reviewer: **Tim Dennée**

The applicant, the District of Columbia Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, with Zivic & Hurdle Architects and the D.C. Department of General Services, requests the Board's review of an application to construct a mechanical parking structure/system at the rear of Engine Company No. 28.

The Board last reviewed proposed work at this property in December. A new, automated lift system is intended to stack the firefighters' cars compactly, alleviating a parking problem at this small lot, the front of which is designated to access for the firefighting apparatus.

The system has three levels, each about equivalent in height to that of a garage, but the lowest level will be sunk below the elevation of the alley. As seen from the alley then, the system would be about the height of a two-story garage, but it would extend the width of the lot, allowing five cars to be parked along each level.

The system consists only of the mechanism and the structure necessary to support it and the cars and is thus entirely open. While the system itself seems like an excellent and innovative way to address an intractable problem, its open, steel structure and exposed, multiple automobiles are unusual enough on an alley of small, commercial and residential structures that the construction of walls as a screen around the system would make it more compatible with a context of small garages and additions. An enclosure, open at the alley, of course, may help attenuate any noise produced by the system, as well as reflectivity from the cars and, although the structure is open at the top, such walls may help protect the vehicles and moving parts from some effects of the weather.

The staff recommends that the Board recommend issuance of a permit as consistent with the purposes of the preservation law, on the condition that the application is revised to include walls to enclose the system/structure with a compatible wall/siding material to be approved by staff.